taken up an in-depth study of the proposal for any possible chemical/ plastic/wax coating of Indian bank notes with a view to increasing its life period. The outcome of the study is awaited.

Reduction of excise duty on cotton yarn

3172. SHRI V.P. DURAISAMY: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Coimbatore has appealed to the Ministry of Finance to reduce the excise duty on cotton yarn from 9.2 per cent to 5.75 per cent; and

(b) if so, what is the reaction of the Ministry thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI V. DHANANJAY KUMAR): (a) The Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Coimbatore, had represented to the Ministry of Finance for reduction of excise duty on cotton yarn.

(b) It was decided to maintain the excise duty on cotton yarn at 9.2 per cent (total).

Issuance of Licences by IRDA

3173. SHRI A. VIJAYA RAGHAVAN: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Insurance Regulatory Development Authority has started giving licences for life insurance and general insurance companies;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Authority will give permission to State Co-operative Banks to do insurance business; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL): (a) and (b) The Authority has informed that they have invited applications from prospective Indian Insurance companies w.e.f. 16th August, 2000.

(c) and (d) State Co-operative Banks will have to seek permission from their regulatory and supervisory authorities subject to the